



Using the World Wide Web

November 2002 ♦ Guide to Using the Internet Successfully

Emoticons & Acronyms

There are many ways of adding personality and meaning to your e-mail message, these are known as emoticons and acronyms. There are lots of them, but the most common are the ones to indicate humour. There is the smiley face :-) (try looking at it sideways), the grin, and the very big grin. Try some:

Acronyms

FOFL	Fall on the floor laughing
IRL	In real life
LOL	Laugh out loud
YMMV	Your mileage may vary
ROTFL	Roll on the floor laughing
ITRW	In the real world
TTFN	Ta ta for now
BTW	By the way
Grin	Grin, joking
BG	Big grin
VBG	Very big grin
TIA	Thanks in advance
IOW	In other words

Emoticons

:-)	Smile, "I'm joking"
:-(Frown, "I'm not happy"
:)	Smiley for lazy typists
:(Frown for lazy typists
;-)	Wink, a sly grin
:-O	Shocked
*	Kiss
:-P	Sticking out your tongue
:-(Crying
:-	Can't decide how to feel

Electronic Mail

Electronic mail, or Email, is the term used to describe the tool that allows one computer user to send a message to one or more other computer users over a computer network in a digital form. Email can be sent internally to members of an organization through their internal computer network or they can be sent externally to anyone in the world by using the network of computer networks that make up the Internet.

It's very similar to our traditional mail system with post boxes, post offices, envelopes and addresses. The difference is that instead of Australia Post delivering your messages around the globe for you, messages are sent electronically to other computer users via the computer network (the Internet) taking a fraction of the time to get there AND, you don't have to walk to the letter box!

Just as you can send attachments with your letters in the normal post (snail mail) you can also send computer documents, graphics, software or anything else that can be turned into a digital form attached to an email message.

How does it Work?

In order for messages to be sent from one computer to another, your message needs to be converted into a digital form and forwarded to a computer that acts as a mail server or post office. This mail server sorts

"You can obtain free email accounts through certain web sites on the Internet."

and directs your mail for you. The only way this mail server can direct mail though, to all users is by being connected to a network that all the users are also connected to.

This network can be internal (a stand-alone network) which means you can only send email to other users on that network. If your mail server is connected to the Internet you can also send your email messages to any other computer user that is connected to the Internet anywhere in the world because the Internet is a network of all the little networks of organizations around the world.

This mail server can be within your organization or with an Internet Service Provider, so you would connect to it by logging into your email account. When you send your email message, the mail server decides whether the message is to be passed on to a user on its immediate network or it will pass it onto another mail server on another network closest to it through these combination of networks and each mail server keeps passing it on until it reaches its intended destination. This is known as the 'store' and 'forward' system, storing

Interpreting Email Addresses

Standard naming rules are used for domain names which show the type of organizations and country the people have internet accounts with, and because of this you can remember email addresses as well as web site addresses with greater ease. You can also work out where a person comes from by looking at the email address.

Name	Description
au	Australia
uk	United Kingdom
fr	France

In some cases email addresses includes a country code. This is not often the case with email addresses of users from the United States but this is also becoming more common in other countries.

Name	Description
com	Commercial Organizations
edu	Educational Institutions
org	Non-profit organizations
net	Networks
int	International organizations
mil	Military government organizations
gov	Non-military government organizations

E-mail continued...

your message at various points on the path to its receiver waiting for the link to be free for it to forward your message on the next part of its journey.

The digital data can be broken up and follow different paths (go through different mail servers) to get to its destination but always meets up when it gets to the post office or mail server of the recipient. The mail will stay at the post office until the recipient decides to collect it, which is done by logging into their email account.

Email Software

In order to read or send any electronic mail you will need special software.

Eudora is one of the most commonly used software packages and comes in two versions. Eudora Lite can be downloaded from the Eudora website and used without charge. Eudora Pro - a more advanced version of the software can be purchased for approximately \$89 from most leading software suppliers. The Eudora website can help you locate a supplier closest to you. Eudora can be used on both IBM compatible and Macintosh computers. Microsoft Internet Exchange is also a popular email software package, which comes free with the Windows 95 software.

Web browser like Netscape and Explorer now have an email function also but they are not as sophisticated and reliable as Eudora and Internet Exchange. One benefit of this type of email package is that where addresses of World Wide Web pages are given in the body of the message you can click on the address and the browser will automatically display the page. Eudora also has this ability.

If your school is connected to the statewide VicOne network you can go to the Edumail site to obtain information relating to email software available to Victorian schools. You will need your school username and password to access this site.

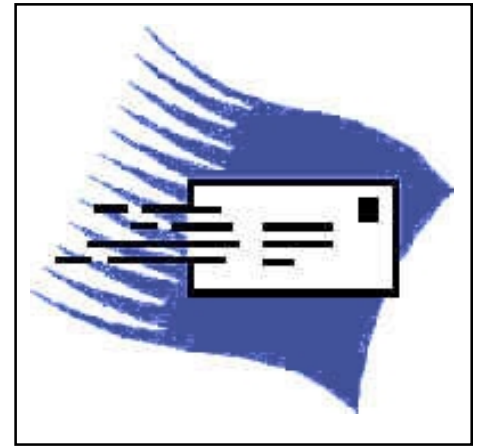
Email Account

To become an email user you need to have an email account set up for you by an Internet Service Provider or your organization. This would normally occur automatically when you get your Internet connection if you were setting up your account privately. With a school or business you would normally gain access to email by talking to your technical advisor where a user account will be set up for you. When you get your account you will be given an email address, a Username and a password which you would use to access your email.

You can obtain free email accounts through certain web sites on the Internet. You check your mail through your web browser by looking at a web page, typing in your name and password. These types of services are nowhere near as secure as having your own email software on your own computer and can be slow with delays. They are free though and provide additional services such as receiving regular news from various sites of your choosing. One such site is the Hotmail Site.

Email Address

Each email user is given an email address that distinguishes them from each other like your name and street address distinguish your house from your neighbors. Your email address is usually your Username or User ID, plus the domain name of the computer through which you normally gain access to the Internet with an @ symbol in-between.



As you can see here my Username is 'sofweb' and the domain name for the Department of Education, Employment and Training (where I work) is edumail.vic.gov.au. Your Username doesn't necessarily have to be your real name it can be a variation or any name of your choosing - e.g. (wizard@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Setting Up Your Account

After Downloading your Email Software and setting up your email account with your Internet Service Provider, you need to set the software up with details like your Username, password, email address and mail server. The Internet Service Provider will normally give you all of this information which you will need to include in the set up. With Mac or Windows 95 you follow the prompts and include the details the provider has given you. If you are not setting your account up privately your technician should do all of this for you.

With free email accounts like Hotmail you do not need to download any software and the instructions are usually simple to follow, and provided on the website.

What Is Internet Chat?

Imagine a room full of people from all around the world talking to each other with everybody in the room being able to hear everyone else's conversation and join in any one of them at any time. Then imagine this room always having people in it any time of day or night for you to drop in and have a conversation with. That's basically what chat is.

Chatting is one of the most popular activities on the Internet. It involves people from all walks of life and just about all ages to coming together in areas where they can join in on a variety of topics that they are interested in with people all around the world. Traditionally chat is text based but can also involve audio and video. In public chat areas people use "user names" or "nicknames" or sometimes represent themselves as graphical icons or "avatars" as they are known in the chat world.

While real time communication can be engaging and educationally useful, we strongly suggest it be used with students in a controlled environment using programs that enable direct links with specific parties rather than joining these public areas. In all cases where students are going to communicate on-line they should be aware of Netiquette and My Rules For Online Safety.